



Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:15 a.m. EDT (NOAA)

Agricultural Weather Highlights - Monday - December 16, 2002

- ***In the West***, weekend storminess aided pastures and winter grains from ***central California to the Pacific Northwest*** and boosted high-elevation snow packs from the ***Sierra Nevada to the Cascades and northern Rockies***. However, high winds caused localized damage from the ***West Coast to the Great Basin***, while blizzard conditions disrupted travel through mountain passes. Widespread precipitation and high winds continue this morning, as another storm system moves ashore.
- ***On the Plains***, mild, dry weather continues to favor overwintering wheat, although soils are unfavorably dry across the ***northwestern half of the region*** and the crop remains exposed to potential weather extremes.
- ***In the Corn Belt***, cold weather is returning, but snow showers are confined to areas downwind of the ***Great Lakes***. The lack of a ***Midwestern*** snow cover continues to promote off-season fieldwork.
- ***In the South***, warm, dry weather favors a limited return to winter wheat planting and final summer crop harvesting, although many fields remain very wet and some lowland flooding persists.

Outlook: A high-pressure system will bring cold, dry weather to the ***Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic States***, while another Pacific storm system will produce widespread rain and snow from the ***Pacific Coast eastward to the Rockies***. Meanwhile, warm, mostly dry weather will prevail on the ***Plains***, although light snow showers are possible in the ***upper Midwest***. By mid-week, showers will spread into the ***Plains, Mississippi Valley, and Great Lakes States*** as a cold front moves slowly eastward, while mild weather will return to the ***East Coast***. The NWS 6-10 day outlook for December 21-25 calls for below-normal precipitation across the ***northern Plains and Pacific Northwest***, while above-normal precipitation is forecast for the ***much of the central and southern U.S.*** Below-normal temperatures are forecast from the ***Pacific Coast eastward to the High Plains***, while cooler-than-normal weather will gradually replace mild conditions across the ***eastern half of the U.S.***

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